

PRELIMINARY DESCRIPTION OF A NEW BURROWING
MUD-SHRIMP FROM EASTERN AUSTRALIA
(CRUSTACEA, MACRURA REPTANTIA, LAOMEDIIDAE)

by

J. C. YALDWYN
Dominion Museum, Wellington, N.Z.

and

ROBERT G. WEAR
Victoria University of Wellington, N.Z.

(Figure 1.)

In 1966, we described a new thalassinid shrimp of the family Laomeidiidae from New Zealand waters as *Jaxea novaezealandiae* (Wear & Yaldwyn, *Zool. Pubs. Vict. Univ. Wellington*, 41). At that time we referred in passing to a large, undescribed burrowing laomeidiid of the genus *Laomedea* from eastern Australian shallow waters (1966: 2, 3). More material of this new form has now become available from mangrove swamps, and from the shallow subtidal channels draining such swamps, and a full illustrated description of this new form is in preparation. Due to unavoidable delays in the completion of this study, it now appears that a colour plate of this eastern Australian *Laomedea* will be published later this year (Healy & Yaldwyn, 1970, *Australian Crustaceans in Colour*, A. H. & A. W. Reed, Sydney, frontispiece) before a formal description is ready. We give here a preliminary description of this species so that its new name can become systematically available.

Family LAOMEDIIDAE

Genus *Laomedea* de Haan in Siebold, 1841.

Not of other authors (cf Neave, *Nomenclator Zoologicus*).

Laomedea healyi n.sp.

A degenerate-eyed, relatively-large, burrowing shrimp with stout, heavily-built and slightly unequal chelipeds. Anterolateral margin of carapace with an orbital spine above *linea thalassinica* and an antennal spine immediately below *linea*. Antennal peduncle short, penultimate segment subequal to ultimate; antennal flagellum with several, prominent, relatively-long, hair-like "branches" irregularly spaced along its length. Chelipeds with fingers heavy and toothed on inner margins. Branchial formula as for *Jaxea novaezealandiae* (i.e. 18 gills present), no podobranch on 1st maxilliped.

Laomedea healyi differs from the only other species in the genus, *L. astacina* de Haan, 1841, from Japan (see Sakai, 1962, *Pubs. Seto mar. biol. Lab.*, X(1):27-34, pls. V-VI), in numerous small details including the possession of an antennal spine on the anterolateral margin of the carapace and the presence of the highly characteristic "branches" along the antennal flagella.

Holotype: A female, carapace length (base of orbit to posterior midline of carapace) 16 mm, from burrow in intertidal mangrove mud, Careel Bay, Pittwater, New South Wales, December 1967, Anthony Healy & J. C. Yaldwyn (Australian Museum No. P.15820). The frontispiece of the above mentioned book *Australian Crustaceans in Colour* is a colour photograph of the holotype alive, while the exact type-locality is at the foot of the mangrove tree illustrated

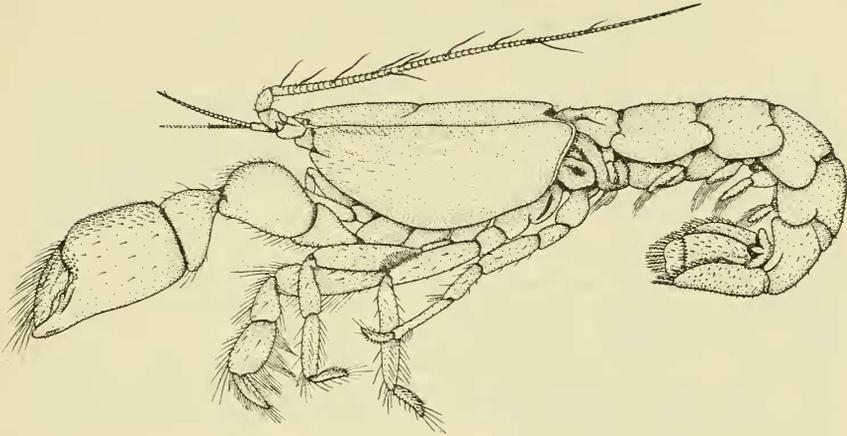


Figure 1.—*Laomedia healyi* Yaldwyn & Wear, Holotype. New South Wales.

at the left of plate 9 in Gillett & Yaldwyn, 1969, *Australian Seashores in Colour*, A. H. & A. W. Reed, Sydney.

Paratype specimens from New South Wales and Queensland are in the Australian Museum collections and will be listed with the full description of this species now being prepared for the *Australian Zoologist*.
